The Gallup Poll

Nixon's Popularity Shows New Decline

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By George Gallup

PRINCETON, N.J.,—Public discontent over soaring prices, coupled with a continuing skepticism based on Watergate, are taking a toll on President Nixon's popularity.

In the latest nationwide survey, 35 per cent of all persons interviewed express approval of the way Nixon is handling his job as president, while 55 per cent disapprove. This represents a decline of three percentage points in his approval rating since the previous measurement, taken soon after Nixon's televised Aug. 15 speech on Watergate.

The latest approval figure is four points above Nixon's low point of 31 per cent, recorded in early August.

The President's lowest rating since he has been in office (31 per cent) was recorded in an early August survey, following several weeks of televised hearings on Watergate. That rating represented a drop of 37 points from Nixon's high of 68 per cent recorded last January following the Vietnam peace settlement—the most precipitous drop yet recorded for any president in a seven-month period. It was also the lowest rating given any president in 20-years—since Jan. 1953, when only 31 per cent registered approval in President Truman's final month in office.

This is the question which has been asked about the incumbent president since the Roosevelt years to measure presidential popularity.

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Nixon is handling his job as President?

The table below shows the latest national findings:

Approve	35%
Disapprove	55
No Opinion	10

Here are four statements concerning President Nixon's connection with the Watergate affair. Will you tell me which one comes closest to your own point of view? (A) Nixon planned the Watergate bugging from the beginning. (B) Nixon did not plan the bugging but knew about it before it took place. (C) Nixon found out about the bugging after it occurred, but tried to cover it up. (D) Nixon had no knowledge of the bugging and spoke up as soon as he learned about it.

	Planned	Knew About	Cover-up	Know-ledge	No Opinion
Sept. 7-10	11%	28%	33%	18%	10%
Aug. 17-20	9	24	40	23	4
(Aug. 15: Nixon's Speech on Watergate)					
Aug. 3-6	8	29	37	15	11
July 6-9	9	30	34	15	12
June 22-25	8	27	36	17	12
June 1-4	8	28	31	19	14

Here is the question dealing with the public's views on the White House tapes, with the national findings:

President Nixon has said he will not turn over to Chief U.S. District Julge John Sirica tapes of his conversations with advisers involved in the Watergate affair. Do you think he should or should not give Sirica the tapes?

Should	61%
Should not	32
No Opinion	7

The latest findings reported today are based on a national survey of 1,463 adults, 18 or older. Interviewing was conducted in person in more than 300 scientifically selected localities during the period Sept. 7-10.

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